

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112

Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, it is unclear as to how the LCD screen of claim 13 displays a bonusing event wherein the bonusing event is an LCD screen that allows a player to perform certain actions. In view of claims 25 and 27, it appears that the bonusing event is a game or other competition that is displayed on an LCD screen, and not an LCD screen itself. Therefore for the purposes of this examination claim 26 will be interpreted as describing a bonusing event as being a display of a game wherein a player plays one on one with a casino dealer.

Applicant has amended the claim accordingly.

Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the elements. See MPEP § 2172.01. The omitted elements are: video processing means that allow a video monitor located on a gaming machine to produce pictures on an interactive sign. As best understood from Applicant's disclosure, the video monitor on a gaming machine presents an image to the player that corresponds with an image that is displayed on an interactive sign. However, it appears that other video processing means produce the pictures on the interactive sign, not the video monitor. These means may include, but are

not limited to, video processing software, graphics cards, media for transmitting data images, or the LCD that comprises the interactive sign. Therefore, for the purposes of this examination, the claim will be interpreted to be describing the fact that images produced on a video monitor of the gaming machine are reproduced by some means on the interactive sign.

Claim 28 has been amended accordingly.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 13, 22, rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) was anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Osawa '944 (USPN 6,634,944).

Claims 13, 22-24, 28: Osawa '944 discloses a gaming system that has a number of slot machines that provide independent play linked to a second play means that provides further play for a number of the slot machines (Fig. 1, cols. 4-5, and 16-22). The second play means has a display means/interactive sign comprising an array of screens which are operable to show the further play in a manner such that a number of players and observers can see it (Fig. 2, col. 5 lines 26-34). Each of the screens is related to a win value during further play by displaying win values and odds relating to the displayed race or contest and dividends provided to players when a competition in further play is finished (col. 9 lines 26-35 and 48-55, col. 10 lines 20-38, and cols. 11-12 lines 56-4). Each slot machine has a display (lead lines 27, 43, 105), and the

prospective user on a slot machine can view the second play means with the interactive sign (col. 5 lines 26-34). It is suggested that the second play means is separate from each of the slot machines to be viewable from each of the slot machines, and from the schematic Fig. 1 that indicates separate apparatus for the slots machines and the second play means that includes a display. Osawa '944 discloses control means or data inputs on the slot machines to control play on the slot machines (lead lines 26, 42, col. 7 lines 11-18, col. 8 lines 4-12 and 26-31, col. 9 lines 6-15). The second play means is operable to provide a level of play controlled by the control means inputs of the slot machine (col. 10 lines 20-38, col. 13 lines 27-42, col. 15 lines 12-43). The second play means is a gambling facility as demonstrated by the awards it provides based on results (lead lines 29, 45, cols. 11-12 lines 40-4). It is noted that the further play could be either the competition game or the audience participation game as described in Osawa '944 as they are both games that are secondary to the slot machine game and are played using the second play means. Osawa '944 discloses that when a player at a terminal is playing in a game on the secondary play means, a system alerts a player through an invitation when they are on the display means/ interactive sign (col. 12 lines 28-44). The display means of the secondary means (the interactive sign) could also be an LCD display screen or array of LCD display screens. Osawa '944 explicitly discloses that a type of

display means could be an LCD display (col. 16 lines 55-67 and col. 18 lines 41-58), and while it is not explicitly disclosed that the interactive sign is an LCD screen, it is understood that one embodiment of Osawa '944 could utilize an LCD screen as the type of display means used for the secondary play means. Regardless of whether Osawa '944 implies the use of LCD screens, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Osawa '944 with an LCD screen as disclosed to be a type of display means in Osawa '944 as the display means of the secondary play means (interactive Sign) for the purposes of using a display that would better suit the gaming environment instead of CRT displays or projection screens which take up more space and do not provide as clear a picture as an LCD display.

Claim 13 requires at least two gaming machines linked together and the gaming machines linked to an interactive sign. The interactive sign comprises an LCD screen. The LCD screen displays a bonusing event that players can enter in. The players playing the linked gaming machines enter the bonusing event compete against each other on the interactive sign.

Osawa teaches a display part designed to display a competition screen which may be a projection type projector or a plurality of CRT tube faces. The screen shows a demonstration time and a time when the game will start. The game invites characters to participate in the game. There are participating terminal game machines which generate the character information. Once the

characters are determined, they are displayed on the screen and odds are determined for receiving prizes. Audience participants can then participate.

Claim 13 requires that at least two gaming machines are linked together. This is not taught by Osawa. Further the games described by Osawa are audience participation games and not competition games between users at different slot machines or a user and the casino. Therefore claim 13 is not anticipated or obvious over the prior art.

Claim 22 relates to a gaming machine system of claim 13 wherein the interactive sign comprises an LCD screen where a player enters bonus play and competition is between a player playing the gaming machine and the bonusing event on the interactive sign.

Claim 22 requires that the player is playing the gaming machine and competing on the interactive sign. This is not taught by Osawa. For these reasons and the reasons stated above for claim 13, claim 22 is not anticipated or obvious over the prior art.

Claim 23 relates to the gaming machine system of claim 13 further comprising: a system for alerting a player when they are playing on the interactive sign.

For the reasons stated above for claim 13, claim 23 is not anticipated or obvious over the prior art.

Claim 24 relates to a gaming machine system of claim 13 wherein a player operates the bonusing event from any of the gaming machines linked to the interactive sign.

For the reasons stated above for claim 13, claim 24 is not anticipated or obvious over the prior art.

Claim 28 relates to the gaming machine system of claim 13 further comprising: a video monitor located on said gaming machine which records the player playing the bonusing event and to produces pictures on said interactive sign.

Claim 28, cannot be taught by Osawa since the claim requires that the gaming machine record the player playing the bonusing event on the interactive sign, whereas Osawa requires that characters are created by the system. For these reasons and the reasons stated above for claim 13, claim 28 is not anticipated or obvious over the prior art.

Claim 25-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Osawa '944.

Claim 25-27: As described above, Osawa '944 discloses all the features of the claimed invention except for explicitly disclosing all the various types of games that can be played using the system with a common LCD screen display means for secondary play, including a bonusing event with a wheel having denominations on it, a bonusing event that is performed on a LCD screen which allows a player to play one on one with a casino

dealer on the screen, and a bonusing event of a ferris wheel game.

At the time the invention was made, it would have been an obvious matter of choice to a person of ordinary skill in the art to have used any of these types of bonusing events, including the bonusing event explicitly disclosed in Osawa '944, because Applicant has not disclosed that providing a bonus game of a wheel with denominations, a competitive poker game, or a ferris wheel game provides an advantage, is used for a particular reason, or solves a stated problem. It is noted that Applicant states that it is an objective to provide such games, but provides no advantage, reason, or problem addressed by using such games and events in the gaming machine system. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected Applicant's invention to perform equally well with these games or any other game acting as a secondary bonus game, such as the game explicitly disclosed in Osawa '944, because each of the games provide a secondary level of play that allows players to compete on a publically viewable screen for added entertainment to a primary game of a gaming machine.

Claim 25 relates to the gaming machine system of claim 13 wherein the bonusing event comprises a wheel which has various monetary denominations.

Osawa teaches creating characters who compete such as in a running race, and betting on the characters who have different odds. It is not obvious for the system to create a wheel having different denominations. In this case

one could not bet separately and bet on different characters. For this reasons and the reasons stated above for claim 13, claim 25 is not obvious over the prior art.

Claim 26 relates to the gaming machine system of claim 13 wherein the bonusing event is a display of a game on an LCD screen wherein a player plays one on one with a casino dealer on the LCD screen.

Osawa teaches creating characters who compete such as in a running race, and betting on the characters who have different odds. It is not obvious for the system for a player to compete against the casino one on one. In this case one could not bet separately and bet on different characters. For this reason and the reasons stated above for claim 13, claim 26 is not obvious over the prior art.

Claim 27 relates to the gaming machine system of claim 13 wherein the bonusing event comprises a ferris wheel that unloads coins when one of the linked gaming machines triggers the bonusing event .

Osawa teaches creating characters who compete such as in a running race, and betting on the characters who have different odds. It is not obvious for the system to create a wheel having different denominations. In this case one could not bet separately and bet on different characters. For this reasons and the reasons stated above for claim 13, claim 27 is not obvious over the prior art.

Applicant believes the application is now in condition for allowance.

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Signature: 

Name: Maureen P. Herbst

Respectfully submitted,



Philip M. Weiss

Reg. No. 34,751

Attorney for Applicant

Weiss & Weiss

300 Old Country Rd., Ste. 251

Mineola, NY 11501

(516) 739-1500